

# McLean County – Articles of History

By Jerry Long



**McLean County**





**History of Kentucky, Volume II, Lewis Collins & Richard H. Collins,  
Clearfield Company, 1874, pages 596-598:**

MCLEAN county, the 103d in order of formation, was established in 1854, out of parts of Daviess, Muhlenburg, and Ohio counties, and named in honor of Judge Alney McLean. It is situated in the western part of the state, on the waters of Green river, which forms half its eastern boundary, intersects the county centrally, and, with Pond river, forms its western boundary line. It is bounded N. by Daviess, E. by Ohio, S. by Muhlenburg, and W. by Hopkins and Webster counties. Its other streams are: Buck, Cypress, Big, Long Falls, Brushy Fork, Abe's, Yellow, and Delaware creeks. The surface of the country is, a large portion, undulating, the balance level; a part is known as the Green river flats. It is about the 14th largest tobacco-raising county in the state, while the cereals and live stock are raised extensively and profitably.

Towns.— Calhoon is the county seat, incorporated Jan. 7, 1852, and named in honor of Judge John Calhoon, for many years a circuit judge, and for four years, 1835-39, a representative in congress; population in 1860, 511, and in 1870 estimated at 950, but not given in the U. S. census; it has, besides the usual county buildings, 11 lawyers, 4 physicians, 2 churches, 3 dry goods and 2 drug stores, 3 hotels, 2 mechanics' shops, a steam saw mill, and a flouring mill; is situated on the N. bank of Green river, 68 miles from its mouth, and 279 miles from Louisville, by the river.

Rumsey, on the s. bank of Green river, opposite Calhoon, is the oldest town in the county; incorporated Feb. 18, 1839; population in 1860, 373, and in 1870, only 216; it has 2 taverns, a store, grocery, machine shop, flour mill, a wool carding, spinning, and weaving factory, a lawyer, and a doctor.

Livermore, the second town in the county, is on Green river, just where the Owensboro and Nashville railroad crosses that stream, 8 miles above Calhoon; incorporated March 1, 1850; population in 1870, 316.

Sacramento, 10 miles W. of S. of Calhoon; population in 1870, 195; incorporated March 1, 1860. The other villages, and post offices, are — Wrightsburgh, on Green river, 52 miles above its mouth, and by land 12 miles n. w. of Calhoon; Beech Grove, Daviessville, Bremen, Worthington, and Belleview — the two latter railroad stations.

Statistics of McLean County.

When formed.....See page 26	Tobacco, hay, corn, wheat.. p.266, 268
Population, in 1860 and 1870....p. 258	Horses, mules, cattle, hogs ..... p. 268
“ whites and colored.....p. 260	Taxable property, in 1870.....p. 270
“ towns.....p. 262	Land No. of acres, and value of. . p. 270
“ white males over 21.....p. 266	Latitude and longitude.....p. 257
“ children bet. 6 and 20 yrs. ... p. 266	Distinguished citizens.....see Index.

Members of the Legislature From McLean County.

Senate .— Dr. Albert D. Cosby, 1857-61, '65-69; John W. Johnson, 1869-73.

House of Representatives. — Henry Griffith, 1861-63; Isaac Calhoon, 1863-67; David C. Turner, 1867-69; R. E. Humphrey, 1869-71; John Rowan, 1871-73; Wm. M. Stevens, 1873-75.

In McLean county, are 22 dry goods stores, 17 mechanics' shops, 19 physicians, 11 lawyers, and 22 churches (8 Methodist, 7 Baptist; 4 Cumberland Presbyterian, 2 Reformed or Christian, and 1 Roman Catholic).

Green River, which runs alongside or through McLean county for over 40 miles, is navigable for steamboats nearly all the year. Lock and Dam No. 2 is at the foot of the Vienna falls, the lock on the Rumsey side.

Springs.—Two miles N. of Calhoon, are the McLean county oil wells, and a spring known as the Tar springs.

The First Fort or Station was built, where Calhoon now stands, in 1788, by Solomon Rhoads, and called Vienna. In 1790, James Inman built Pond station, a few miles s. E. of Calhoon.

A Party of Trappers from the fort at Vienna. In 1790, James Inman built Pond station, a few miles s. e. of Clahoon.

A party of Trappers from the fort at Vienna, in 1790, while at the mouth of Green river, was attacked by Indians—who killed - McElmurray, and wounded Wm. Faith, a lad of 17, who made his escape and returned to the fort. About the same time, the Indians killed Thos. Downs near the fort.

In the War of the Rebellion, Gen. Thos. L. Crittenden's division of Federal soldiers was located at Calhoon, in the fall of 1861 and winter succeeding. On Dec. 27, 1861, a skirmish occurred at Sacramento in this county, between detachments of Col. Jas. S. Jackson's Federal regiment and Col. Napoleon B. Forrest's Confederate regiment, then stationed at Hopkinsville, Christian Co.; the latter was victorious, loss not known; Federal loss 8 killed, 9 wounded, 16 prisoners. (See Collins' Annals, page. 98; vol i.)

Judge ALNEY MCLEAN, in honor of whom McLean county was named, was a native of Burke co., North Carolina; emigrated to Kentucky, and began the practice of law at Greenville, Muhlenburg county, about 1805; had but little to do with politics before 1808; was a representative from that county in the legislature, 1812, '13; a captain in the war of 1812; a representative in congress for four years, 1815-17 and 1819-21; one of the electors for president in 1825, casting his vote and that of the state for Henry Clay; again in 1833 an elector for the state at large, when the vote of the state was cast a second time for the same distinguished citizen; appointed a circuit judge, and for many years adorned the bench. One of the oldest and ablest of Kentucky ex-judges, in a letter to the author, speaks of Judge McLean as "a model gentleman of the 'old school,' of great courtesy and kindness to the junior members of the bar," an honored citizen and a just judge.



**The Kentucky Encyclopedia, John E. Kleber, editor,  
The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, KY, 1992:**

[page 599] MCLEAN COUNTY, the 103d in order of formation, is located in the Western Coal Field region traversed by U.S. 431 and KY 136. The county is bordered by Daviess, Henderson, Hopkins, Muhlenberg, Ohio, and Webster counties and has an area of 256 square miles. McLean County was formed from portions of Daviess, Muhlenberg, and Ohio counties on

January 28, 1854, and named in honor of Alney McLean, veteran of the War of 1812, state representative, and congressman (1835-39). The county seat is Calhoun. The Green River forms a portion of its eastern border and dissects the county. The topography of McLean County is level to rolling, with wide bottomlands along the Green River and its tributaries, including Pond River. Less than 25 percent of the land remains forested.

The first white settlers in the McLean County area were in conflict with the Indians and some dug caves in the hillside near Calhoun for protection. Fort Vienna, the present site of Calhoun, was established in 1785 by Solomon and Henry Rhoads. Other communities include the incorporated towns of Island, Livermore, and Sacramento.

The Green River provided a deep channel for steamboat traffic in the nineteenth century. The first steamboat built on the Green River was completed at Rumsey in 1846 by the Jones Brothers. The river channel was improved greatly in the late 1830s, when a series of locks and dams was constructed. The river permitted farmers to trade with markets in the Ohio and Mississippi river valleys.

During the Civil War the county was divided in its loyalties. Several skirmishes took place between 1861 and 1864. A Confederate force under the command of Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest defeated a Union force at Sacramento in December 1861. On August 9, 1862, a guerrilla force captured the towns of Calhoun and Rumsey. Federal forces, however, soon defeated the Confederates and drove them from the county.

Following the war in 1865, McLean County returned to a more stable existence. Its economy remained agrarian into the twentieth century. During the first half of the twentieth century, dark-cured and fired-cured tobaccos were the main crops. By 1987 soybeans and corn were primary crops. Over three-fourths of the county is farmland, and in 1987 it ranked fortieth in the state in agricultural receipts. During the twentieth century, the county's economic base expanded to include the manufacture of such products as furniture, metal products, cabinets, and food stuffs, as well as kerosene and lumber.

McLean County was the home of James Bethel Gresham, reputed to be have been the first United States soldier killed in World War I. Gresham died in the Battle of Sommerville, November 3, 1917.

The population of McLean County was 9,062 in 1970; 10,090 in 1980; and was 9,628 in 1990.

See Edith L. Bennett, *Lest We Forget* (Hartford, Ky., 1977).

RON D. BRYANT

[page 151] CALHOUN, the county seat of McLean County, is located on the Green River and KY 81. The town was first laid out in 1785 by Henry Rhoads and called Rhoadsville. Solomon Rhoads, his brother, then built a fort. John Hanley, who took the Rhoads land by lawsuit in 1787, is said to have renamed the town Fort Vienna. On February 23, 1849, the town was named in honor of Judge John Calhoun, first circuit judge of Fort Vienna, who also served in the U.S. Congress during 1835-39. The town, incorporated January 7, 1852, became the county seat in 1854 when McLean County was formed. For many years the town of Calhoun was listed as Calhoon, a local spelling. In 1860 the population was 511 and by 1870 it reached 950.

The first McLean County courthouse was constructed in Calhoun around 1854-55. In 1870 a two-story brick Italianate building replaced the original structure and in 1904-8 was succeeded by a two-story brick building of classical design with Beaux-Arts influence.

During the Civil War the town was briefly captured on August 9, 1862, by a band of Confederate guerrillas. Later in 1862, Federal troops attacked and defeated a Confederate force

near there. In the 1870s, the town had a steam sawmill and a flour mill, along with three hotels, three drygoods stores, and two drugstores.

In 1990 Calhoun was the site of several McLean County industries, including the manufacture of furniture. Agricultural products, in addition to the production of coal and timber, are part of the local economy.

The population of the fifth-class city was 901 in 1970; 1,080 in 1980; and 854 in 1990.

RON D. BRYANT

[page 563] LIVERMORE LYNCHING. The victim of the lynching at Livermore in McLean County, Kentucky, on April 20, 1911, was Will Porter (or Potter), a black man who shot and wounded Frank Mitchell, a white man, after a barroom quarrel. Porter was then arrested by the sheriff, V.P. Stabler. The incident received national and international news coverage; except for the shooting and the arrest, the accounts vary. The New York Times said that Stabler, concerned for Porter's safety, hid him in the opera house basement and locked the doors; however, a mob of fifty men reached Porter, tied his hands and feet, brought him to center stage, and shot him standing there. A second version, reported in several Kentucky newspapers, maintained that the mob took Porter from jail to the opera house, where they charged admission to his hanging. Those who purchased orchestra seats were allowed to empty their guns into the hanging figure, while those in the gallery had only one shot.

On May 2 the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) adopted a resolution condemning the lynching and sent letters to President William Howard Taft, Congress, and Kentucky Gov. A.E. Willson (1907-11), requesting that they do the same. After Willson and other whites demanded the arrest of the lynchers, warrants were issued for eighteen of the men involved. Frank Mitchell's brother, Lawrence, and two other men identified as the leaders of the lynch mob were separately indicted and tried on the charge of murder. All the defendants were quickly acquitted.



**Kentucky Place Names, Robert M. Rennick,  
The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, KY, 1984:**

[page 18] Beech Grove (McLean): This village with po is at the jct of KY 56, 136, and 147, 81/2 mi nw of Calhoun. According to tradition, it was first located on the bank of Mason Creek, a Green R tributary, 1/2 mi n of the present site, and was called Buckhorn. It was served by the po of Mason Creek from Apr 6, 1866, till 1878 when it was relocated at its present site and renamed Beech Grove for a local grove of beech trees. ("McLean County News", Bicentennial issue, 1 July 1976, p.13, 'Beech Grove', by Elizabeth Smith Cox,

[pages 45-46] Calhoun (McLean): This 5th class city and seat of McLean Co is on the n bank of Green R, 90 mi sw of downtown Louisville. Henry Rhoads (1739-1809), a German-born Pennsylvanian, is reported to have laid out a town at the Long Falls of Green R in 1784-85 and called it Rhoadsville. In 1785 his brother Solomon is said to have built a fort on the hill overlooking the r. The community was renamed Fort Vienna, ostensibly by John Hanley who had acquired Rhoads's land by suit in 1787. A po was est there as Calhoun on Feb 23, 1849, with William H. Williams, pm, named for John Calhoon (sic) (1797-1852), lawyer, circuit judge, and US congressman (1835-39). The town was laid off and chartered in 1852 and contended successfully

with Rumsey, across the r, for the seat of the new co which was est in 1854. ('McLean County Was Settled by 1784', "McLean County News", Bicentennial issue, 1 July 1976, p.1)

[page 188] Glenville (McLean): This hamlet with extinct po lies at the jct of KY 81 and 140, 4 1/2 mi ne of Calhoun. The first po to serve this area was est by John Moseley on June 12, 1825, as Long Falls Creek for the stream 3/4 m is. In 1859 the po was moved to and/or renamed Glenville with William S. Givens, pm; it again became Long Falls Creek in 1864 but resumed the Glenville name in 1884, and was discontinued in 1905. It was named for the many Glenn families in the area. It may h. borne the nickname Lick Skillet for the scarcity of food in the area at one time. (Manuscript on McLean Co. place names for KY Place Name Survey, 1972, by Katharyn Leachman)

[150] Island (McLean): This 6th class city with po lies at the jct of US 431 and KY 85, 8 mi se of Calhoun. In the early 19th cent, Judge William Worthington owned a large acreage on what was known for many years as "The Island," an area of 8 sq mi surrounded during high tide by backwater from Green R and other local waterways. On Jan 15, 1829, the judge est the Worthington po in his home, 1/2 mi n of the present site of Island. It was discontinued in 1860. When the Owensboro and Nashville (now L&N) RR was completed in 1872, Island Station was est near Worthington's home site and a new po was organized as Island Station on May 20, 1873. Both po and town were renamed Island in 1882. ("A History of Muhlenberg County", by Otto A. Rothert, John P. Morton, Louisville, KY, 1913; and 'Island', by Mrs. Wesson Freels, "McLean County News", Bicentennial issue, 1 July 1976, p.12)

[page 176] Livermore (McLean): This 5th class city with po lies at the confluence of the Rough and Green rs, 6 1/2 mi ese of Calhoun. Founded in 1837 by William A. Brown, it was first called Brown's Landing, but was renamed Livermore when Brown est the po on May 15, 1838. Some historians say the name honored James Henry Livermore, allegedly the first settler and/or storekeeper, about which nothing else is known; others claim it was for Alonzo Livermore (1801-88), a civil engineer from Pennsylvania, who supervised the construction of Green R's Lock and Dam No. 2 at Rumsey. The town was inc in 1850. ("A History of Muhlenberg County", by Otto A. Rothert, John P. Morton, Louisville, KY, 1913; 'Livermore', by Edith Bennett, "McLean County News", Bicentennial issue, 1 July 1976, p8; 'The Man in the Big Hat Was Founder of Livermore', "McLean County News", 9 Oct 1958)

[page 216] Nuckols (McLean): This hamlet with recently discontinued po lies at the jct of US 431 and KY 1080, 7 1/2 mi e of Calhoun. This, or the point where 1080 crosses the L&N RR tracks less than 1/4 mi w, was first called Tichenors Station for Manley Berry Tichenor, a nearby landowner. When the then Owensboro & Nashville RR arrived here in 1867, a station was built that came to be called Nuckols Station for Neverson 'Nef' Nuckols, a local farmer and merchant who had settled in McLean Co in 1870. The po was est on July 2, 1895, with Hiram McMillion, pm. (Manuscript on McLean Co. place names for KY Place Name Survey, 1972, by Katharyn Leachman)

[pages 259-260] Sacramento (McLean): This 6th class city with po lies at the jct of KY 81/85 and 254, 8 mi s of Calhoun. On May 20, 1852, the Social Hill po was est at a settlement called Crossroads. Two years later George L. Helm laid off a town, which according to tradition was named at the suggestion of John Vickers for the town or r valley by Sutter's Fort in the California gold fields, from which he had recently returned. The McLean Co town was inc as

Sacramento on Mar 1, 1860, and the po was renamed this on Oct 8, 1861. ('Sacramento', by Kenny Ward, "McLean County News", Bicentennial issue, 1 July 1976, p.11)



**The Beginning of Old Vienna, Now Calhoun in McLean County,  
Alvin L. Prichard, The History Quarterly of the Filson Club, Vol. 3,  
April 1929, No. 3, pp.105-112, Louisville, KY, John P. Morton & Company:**

When the General Evan Shelby Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, on October 11, 1928, dedicated a marker commemorating the founding of Fort Vienna, or Vienna Station, now Calhoun in McLean County, it revived interest in the history of the early posts along lower Green River. Mrs. Nancy Lampton Allen's account of the erection of this marker is published in the January number of THE HISTORY QUARTERLY. Mrs. G. Bright Hawes, of Maceo, Daviess County, has in her possession some original papers throwing valuable light on the early settlement of Vienna. Of these she has kindly allowed The Filson Club to make photostat copies for the Club's archives.

At least one historian, Harrison D. Taylor, of Hartford, Ohio County,

[footnote 1 - *Ohio County, Kentucky, in the Olden Days*, a series of old newspaper sketches of fragmentary history, by Harrison D. Taylor, prepared for publication in book form by his granddaughter, Mrs. Mary Taylor Logan. (Louisville, 1926,) These sketches were published in the local papers in 1857 and again in 1877. The second and third chapters contain material on old Vienna.]

evidently had access to some of these papers many years ago, but as his work was first published in a newspaper without the footnotes he would otherwise have used, he did not identify his authorities, and those on old Vienna were lost again to future investigators until recently when Mrs. Hawes showed them to The Filson Club. Anyone searching for the beginnings of the lower Green River country will find these papers full of interesting data. The following is an attempt to present, in a general way, the contents of the Hawes documents on Old Vienna.

In February, 1780, Jacob Myers, a land speculator: acquired large bodies of land around the Falls of Green River,

[footnote 2 - 'The certificate upon which the Vienna land seems to have been issued was based on a 400-acre claim filed by Jacob Myers, February 8, 1780, before the Virginia Land Commissioners of the District of Kentucky, then setting at Harrodsburg. Myers had purchased this 400-acre claim of "James Hays, heir at law of John Hays" who, as set forth in the land certificate, had raised a crop of corn "in the year 1776" on land lying on "the north side of Green River adjoining the falls of said river." By the same certificate Myers was also granted "the pre-eruption of 1000 acres adjoining" the Hays claim. This certificate, consisting of about one hundred words, appears in "Certificate Book" published in *The Register* of the Kentucky State Historical Society, September, 1923, p.184.

The Jacob Myers warrants are tabulated in W. H. Jillson's *Old Kentucky Entries and Deeds*, Filson Club Publications No. 34 (1926), pp. 256, 261-264. It may be well to add that the Falls of Green River is thus commented on in a footnote in Taylors' *Ohio County*: "Calhoun was never called Long Falls but was frequently spoken of as The Settlement at Long Falls. At one time there was a long falls in Green River, at Calhoun, near the mouth of a little stream. This falls made it possible, at times, to walk across Green

River at that point, but with the erection of locks and dams in 1834 the falls were obliterated." In 1854, or earlier, the name of old Vienna was changed to Calhoun, in honor of Judge John Calhoun.]

a frontier section at that time within the bounds of what was then Jefferson County. On February 23, 1785, Myers issued a proclamation appointing Henry Rhoads, Isaac Cox, Jr., and Isaac Morrison trustees to lay out two thousand acres at the Falls for the establishment of a town. It is probable that the three men (or one or two of them) were already on the ground and familiar with it, for Judge Lucius P. Little, of Owensboro, an authority on the Green River country, has stated that Henry Rhoads first located his claim for land at the site of the present town of Calhoun (Vienna) in 1784.

[footnote 3 - *Ben Hardin: His Times and Contemporaries 1784-1852*, by Judge Lucius P. Little. (Louisville, 1887.) See also *History of Kentucky*, by Richard H. Collins (Covington, 1882), under McLean County, in Vol. 2., and *History of Muhlenberg County, Kentucky*, by Otto A. Rothert (Louisville, 1913).]

Henry Rhoads, however, seems to have recognized the Myers title, for, on the day of the proclamation, Myers executed his bond to him for ten acres adjoining and on the upper side of the town, which land was laid off to Rhoads July 18, 1785.

The town was laid out in 172 in-lots of one-half acre each, and 50 out-lots of eight acres and five acres each, respectively. To encourage settlement, the first fifty persons to build a house or cabin at least sixteen feet square by August 1, 1785, were to have free an in-lot and an eight-acre out-lot, thirty-two lots being at the choice of the settlers. Those persons who complied with the building requirement by August 1, 1786, were to have an in-lot and a five-acre out-lot by paying £3 to the proprietors.

The town thus established was called Rhoadsville, as the earliest certificate among the Hawes papers, dated July 20, 1785, reads:

"We the subscribers two of the trustees for the town of Rhoadsville do hereby Certify that Abraham Unsell is intituled to An inlot No. 6 in the town aforesaid On Account of building a Cabbin thereon at least sixteen feet Square and becoming an Actual Settler before the first day of August 1785 And also to an Out-lot of Eight Acres No. 15 And do hereby Require that the propirater of said town Grant a Deed to the said Abraham Unsell Accordingly Given under Our hands this 20th July 1785.

Henry Rhoads, John Handley"

In March, 1786, or earlier, the name was changed to Vienna, according to one of the letters. An interesting suggestion as to the reason for the change appears in Taylor's *Ohio County*.

Following Jacob Myers' proclamation a number of settlers flocked into the town and took up their free lots. If all of them complied with the building proviso, the town must have presented a fairly populous appearance. Since all the names of the original Vienna settlers have not been published heretofore, we give the complete list of them and the numbers of the lots assigned to each man, as recorded in the petition in chancery, John Handley plaintiff:

[footnote 4 - Taylor records many of these names in his *Ohio County*. He gives Unsel as Undel, Bozrath as Hogarth, and Virtuse as Vantrace. Handley gives Birtruse as another spelling of the last named. Malyton may be Malston. The penmanship in all cases is far from good, and therefore some names appearing on the old document are subject to more than one transcription.]



Name	In-lot No.	Out-lot No.	Name	In-lot No.	Out-lot No.
Henry Rhoads	3	30	James Clark	22	45
Daniel Rhoads	98	6	Daniel McCoy	106	40
Abraham Unsel	6	15	Thomas Gillaland	11	...
Adam Hay	48	23	William Kelly	42	18
Michael Hay	43	31	John Keith	16	11
Wm Casebear	49	8	John Bozarth	92	35
Nicholas King	23	2	Henry Grass	78	44
Daniel Rhoads	4	19	Isaac Virtuse	28	...
Jacob Knight	2	16	John Sigwalt	177	...
Thomas Gardner	84	12	John Berry	120	....
Henry Hershfield	96	32	J. Elias Moore	152	...
Nicholas Malyton	44	24	Aaron Rollins	124	...
George C. Briscoe	.....		Benjamin Huff	12	...
Thomas Newman	50	17	Daniel Rhoads	4	19
John Bratsman	16	38	Daniel Loud heirs	5	20
John Paul	158	4	John Handley	10	...
Adam Young	29	25			

The John Handley who appears as an original settler and a trustee of the town so early as July 20, 1785, rapidly became the dominant figure in its affairs. It seems that, while Jacob Myers had the legal title to the town-site, he owned only one-third of it, the remaining two-thirds being owned by Thomas Dorsey, John Dorsey, and Samuel Chase, of Maryland. Some time in the spring of 1786 Larkin Dorsey, son of John Dorsey, came to Kentucky as agent for the other proprietors, who were greatly dissatisfied with Myers' management. They complained that, unless he relinquished control, it would speedily dwindle to nothing. Accordingly, a compromise agreement was reached by which the area for the town was reduced to 1,200 acres instead of the original 2,000, and Myers conveyed his title to Dorsey, with a bond for receiving back his one-third of the 1,200 acres and for the carrying out of his agreements with the settlers.

On March 29, 1786, Larkin Dorsey, who was then at Bardstown, wrote Handley, giving him a power of attorney to "Superintended Direct & manage the Settlement of the town of Vienna on Green River (Known by Rhoadsville)." At this time a number of settlers apparently had moved away after taking out their land, and Handley was directed to advertise that such action was contrary to the spirit of the grant and the lots were subject to forfeiture unless these owners became residents by October 1, 1786. Handley was further directed to reserve the "six out-lots"

[footnote 5 - It is probable that in-lots were meant instead of "out-lots." Dorsey had erased and rewritten part of this sentence; he could hardly have intended to say out-lots.]

fronting the river and all unappropriated lots surrounding the public square of four acres, and to lay off no lots nearer to the river than three-quarters of a mile. The price of land was raised to £6 for an in-lot and a five-acre out-lot.

A plat of the in-lots and out-lots was prepared, on a scale of 400 feet to the inch, and kept in Handley's possession. The out-lot plat is roughly nineteen inches square, with one quarter missing, but the in-lot plat fits in this space very closely. It is probable, therefore, that both plats

were originally laid out on the same paper. The draftsman evidently had some difficulty in determining his scale, for on the out-lot plat are several erased lines where he tried out various figures to reach the not entirely accurate conclusion that "209 feet Square makes 161 Square feet More than One Acre." Although some of the out-lots were only five acres, all are laid out of equal size with the eight-acre lots. All of the out-lots mentioned by number in these papers are eight-acre lots. Water Street fronted the river, and parallel to it were First, Second, Third, and Fourth streets. Market, John, Elizabeth, and another, whose name is obliterated, ran at right angles to the numbered streets. Market and Second were the widest, and surrounding their intersection was a four-acre public square.

Handley seems to have had great faith in the future of Vienna, for, while he was selling lots, he was also purchasing them from other settlers. Sometime after April 24, 1786, he bought lots from John Sigwalt; on May 10, 1786, from Abraham Unsell; May 2, 1787, from John Owens; November 2, 1790, he bought out-lot 19 from Daniel Rhoads; and December 3, 1790, Christopher Beeler sold lot 8 and an out-lot to him for £4 5/. Eventually he acquired all of the lots, as will be noticed presently.

The settlers of Vienna were subjected to sporadic Indian raids. We have no record of their seriousness, except one unsuccessful siege mentioned in Taylor's *Ohio County*, but Larkin Dorsey on March 29, 1786, observes: "As it appears there is much danger from the Indians in that quarter and the Inhabitants think it Dangerous to Cultivate there Respective out-lots you will Give them leave to Cultivate the Commons in Common, Observing Only to Kill the heavy Timber." These commons appear to have extended between the block north of Fourth Street and the out-lot section, also east of the block along Elizabeth Street.

For protection against their enemies the Vienna pioneers seem to have made a distinct departure from the conventional type of early fort. There is a ridge or bluff along the river front near Water Street, which Hon. Ben F. Landrum, of Calhoun, who died early in October, 1928, recalls as the site of the Vienna fort. On November 11, 1924, he made an interesting deposition, stating that he was born in 1846 near the present Calhoun and remembered the old fort as a boy. The ridge curved so as to make a rock formation on three sides of it, leaving the river on the fourth. Landrum says that the settlers dug some fourteen tunnels back under the hill and that they were ten to twenty feet in length. He explains that: "This rock formation prevented the Indians from gaining access to the Fort because the tunnels were under the rock and they could not throw arrows or anything into the Fort from the top of the ridge or Hill."

The proprietors did not expect Indian raids to depopulate the town; they had great hopes of Vienna becoming a manufacturing city. November 3, 1787, Thomas Dorsey, of Elk Ridge, Maryland, wrote Handley that he had acquired John Dorsey's title and was sending a Mr. Even Gaither to inspect the land with a view to establishing an iron works there, if ore were discovered nearby. No such manufacturing was started, then or thereafter. Settlers, after building their cabins, were still leaving, and on April 12, 1788, Handley wrote Dorsey for an interpretation of Myers' agreement to give them a clear deed in fee simple upon the erection of such cabins. In reply Dorsey wrote November 20, 1788, that lands would be forfeited if the houses were not kept tenanted. Soon afterward Thomas Dorsey died and his title passed to his widow, Elizabeth, and his son, Archibald. Archibald wrote Handley November 9, 1791, that he expected to visit Kentucky shortly; he said: "The Inhabitants of Vienna may make themselves perfectly easy until that period. Do assure them from me that every man's claim shall be canvassed then: with the utmost impartiality and adjusted on the strictest principles of Justice according to the plans on which the Settlement of the town

was originally founded." This seems to indicate that distribution of the land was still in a state of confusion.

In the meantime Handley entered into an agreement with Jacob Myers by which he acquired the latter's one-third interest in the 1,200 acres. He also acquired all the interests of the original thirty-odd settlers, as well as the ten acres laid out to Henry Rhoads.

Disagreements at length arose between Handley and the two Dorseys in Maryland. Some time. after 1798

[footnote 6 - No date is given on the old copy of Handley's bill in chancery now in the possession of Mrs. Hawes. The suit was brought in the Ohio Circuit Court. Ohio County was not created until December 17 1798, to be effective after July, 1799. (Littell's *Laws of Kentucky*, printed for William Hunter, Frankfort, 1810, Vol. II, p.208. Also Taylor's *Ohio County*, p.15.) Internal evidence in the bill places the date after 1794.]

Handley brought a suit in chancery against Mrs. Elizabeth Dorsey and her son, Archibald, setting forth the whole land situation and claiming they were "Endeavoring to Cheat and Defraud Your Orator in the premisses herein above set forth." He named the original lot-holders as co-defendants, and from his bill it appears that almost half were at that time nonresidents of Kentucky. He asked for all the lots as previously listed, Myers' one-third share of the 1,200 acres, the ten acres assigned from Henry Rhoads, and other proper relief.

Handley won his suit eventually. The final solution of the tangled land questions arising may possibly be found by search in court records. The fact that anything definite can be known concerning the settlement of Vienna is due to the interest of Judge Lucius P. Little and his daughter, Mrs. G. Bright Hawes, descendants of John Handley.

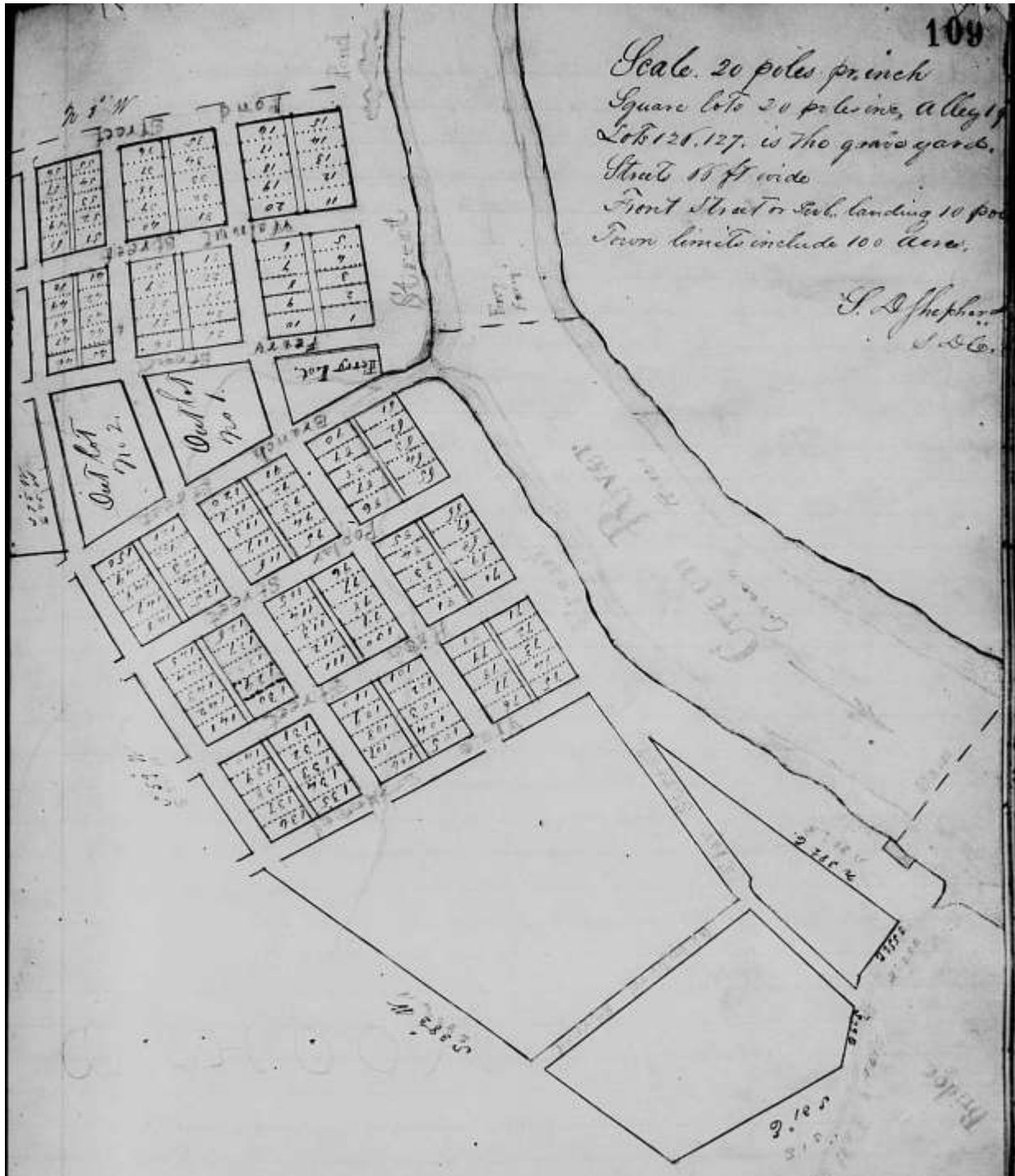
The following is a list of the photostatic copies of papers relating to the founding of Vienna and now in the archives of The Filson Club. These copies, as already stated, are from the originals owned by Mrs. Hawes. The photostatic copies comprise twenty-three sheets, here temporarily classified into thirteen parts:

1. Plat of in-lots and out-lots, photostatted together.
2. Plat of in-lots.
3. Back of in-lot plat.
4. Plat of out-lots.
5. July 20, 1785: Certificate of title for in-lot 6 and out-lot 15 to Abraham Unsel, by Henry Rhoads and John Handley, Trustees. May 2, 1787: Receipt to John Handley for in-lot 7 and out-lot payments, signed by John Owens.
6. March 29, 1786, Bardstown: Larkin Dorsey to John Handley.
7. April 24, 1786: Assignment of title of in-lot 6 and out-lot 15 to John Sigwalt. December 3, 1790: Bill of sale of in-lot 8 and out-lot to John Handley, by Christopher Beeler.
8. May 10, 1786: Receipt for payment for in-lot 5 and out-lot to John Handley, signed by Abraham Unsel. October 25, 1786: Assignment of title of in-lot 142, in-lot 79, in-lot 23, and several out-lots to John Sigwalt by Abraham Unsel.
9. November 3, 1787, Elk Ridge, Maryland: Thomas Dorsey to John Handley.
10. March 20, 1787: Certificate of title to in-lot 1 and out-lot, by John Handley. November 2, 1790: Daniel Rhoads' bill of sale to John Handley for out-lot 19.
11. November 20, 1788, Elk Ridge, Maryland: Thomas Dorsey to John Handley.
12. November 9, 1791, Baltimore: Archibald Dorsey to John Handley.
13. Petition in chancery, John Handley, Plaintiff.

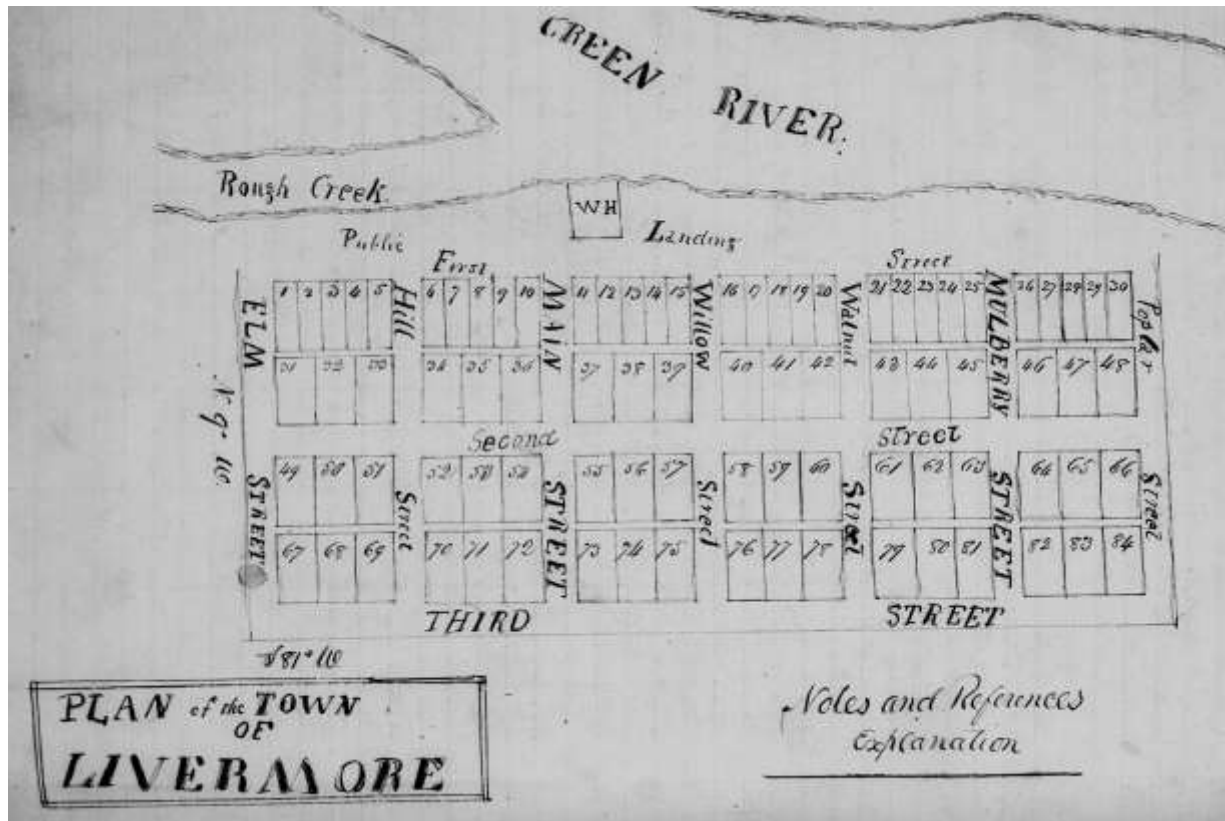


### Plat maps of Calhoun and Livermore, Kentucky

Plat of the town of Calhoun, KY was recorded in 1853 in Daviess County, KY deed book L, page 109:



Plat of the town of Livermore, KY was recorded in 1837 in Ohio County, KY deed book G, pages 272-273:



**Hartford and Owensboro, KY Newspaper  
 Articles on McLean County, KY  
 Compiled by Jerry Long**

The following articles related to the history of McLean County, KY were published in the Ohio County and Owensboro, KY newspapers. Articles in the “McLean County News”, of Calhoun KY can be searched by keyword(s) on the subscription internet site, Newspapers.com. Searches using multiple keywords need to be enclosed in quotation marks: such as – “Fort Vienna”, “Battle of Sacramento, William Downs”, “Bethel Gresham”, etc. Microfilms of the Calhoun (down to 1992) and Owensboro (to present) can be viewed in the Kentucky Room at the Daviess County Public Library in Owensboro, KY. Microfilms of the Ohio County, KY newspapers can be found at the Ohio County Public Library in Hartford, KY. Copies of specific articles can be obtained by contacting these various facilities.

“Owensboro Gazette”, 26 June 1852, p.2: Owensboro and Rumsey Railroad

“Owensboro Monitor”, 13 August 1862, p.3: Guerilla raid on Calhoun by Davison

“Owensboro Monitor”, 19 November 1862, p.3: Seven guerillas captured at Calhoun, including former sheriff Captain Lucas, see also 3 December 1862, p.3

“Owensboro Examiner”, 5 March 1874, p.1: Description of Stringtown near Glenville

“Owensboro Examiner”, 30 April 1875, p.1: Letter from Lick Skillet in McLean County

“Hartford Herald”, 22 September 1875, p.3: Finis H. Little, formerly of Calhoun, now of Aberdeen, MS, receives nomination for Congress

“Hartford Herald”, 13 October 1875, p.3: New McLean County jail

“Owensboro Examiner”, 14 April 1876, p.1: Scraps of History in What is Now McLean County, 5 part series; see also 21 April 1876 p.1 (Rev. Frederick Tanner, Samuel Tanner, Nathan Benton, Wilson L. Whitaker, Aaron Atherton, Thomas Tanner); 28 April 1876, p.1; 5 May 1876, p.1 and 12 May 1876 p.1

“Owensboro Examiner”, 30 March 1877, p.5: Disastrous fire in Livermore on Sunday

“Owensboro Examiner”, 17 August 1877, p.5: “Calhoun Progress” newspaper suspended publication last week

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger”, 24 October 1877, pp.2&3, McLean County Fair

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger”, 24 October 1877, p.3: Calhoun Baptist Church used as a hospital during the Civil War

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger”, 20 March 1878, p.3: W. E. Clark, McLean County Poorhouse keeper, is in jail

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger”, 3 July 1878, p.2: Column on Beech Grove

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger”, 14 August 1878, p.3: Report on the McLean County elections

“Hartford Herald”, 21 May 1879, p.2: Glenville items

“Hartford Herald”, 1 October 1879, p.2: Destructive fire at Livermore

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger”, 1 October 1879, p.3: Large fire at Livermore

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger & Examiner”, 24 March 1880, p.3: Rumsey is submerged

“Hartford Herald”, 31 March 1880, p.2: Destructive fire at Calhoun

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger & Examiner”, 7 July 1880, p.2: “McLean News” begins publication

“Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger & Examiner”, 30 July 1880, p.3: Beech Grove Catholic Church cornerstone laid

“Hartford Herald”, 1 September 1880, p.1: cornerstone of new Catholic church at Beech Grove was laid on August 26

“Hartford Herald”, 1 September 1880, p.1: suit in McLean County involving guardianship of two children of Dr. J. W. Hill

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger & Examiner”, 27 October 1880, p.5: McLean County Fair

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger & Examiner”, 2 March 1881, p.1: Message on Beech Grove

“Hartford Herald”, 27 April 1881, p.2: “McLean County Progress” will shortly be published at Calhoun

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger & Examiner”, 4 May 1881, p.2: “McLean County Progress” newspaper will begin publication; see also 18 May 1881, p.2

“Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger & Examiner”, 29 April 1881, p.2: J. W. White will publish the “McLean County Progress”

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger & Examiner”, 1 March 1882, p.2: Town of Cleopatra in McLean County is incorporated

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger & Examiner”, 10 May 1882, p.2: Cyrus W. Gates has resigned as editor of the “McLean Progress”, new editor is J. L. Goodman

“Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger”, 9 June 1882, p.4: Explosion on the steamer Evansville at Calhoun, 2 killed & 11 injured

“Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger”, 15 August 1882, p.1: Official vote totals for elections in McLean County

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger & Examiner”, 23 August 1882, p.3: Long Falls Christian Church in McLean County to be dedicated

“Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger”, 24 October 1882, p.4: The Calhoun Fair

“Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger”, 5 June 1883, p.4: Oak Grove Methodist Church in McLean County is dedicated

“Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger”, 23 October 1883, p.4: McLean County Fair

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger & Examiner”, 24 October 1883, p.3: McLean County Fair

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger & Examiner”, 30 January 1884, p.3: List of pensioners in Daviess & McLean Counties

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger & Examiner”, 26 March 1884, p.3: Description of McLean County & Calhoun

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger & Examiner”, 26 March 1884, p.3: Cleopatra suffers storm damage

“Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger”, 8 April 1884, p.1: History of Rumsey

“Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger”, 19 September 1884, p.4: Name of post office Long Falls changed to Glennville

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger & Examiner”, 24 September 1884, p.3: Glennville post office established

“Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger”, 24 October 1884, p.1: McLean County Fair

“Owensboro Tri-Weekly Messenger”, 22 January 1885, p.1: “Old Vienna Sketches: A Second Chapter on the Famous Green River”

“Owensboro Tri-Weekly Messenger”, 12 February 1885, p.4: Old Vienna Sketches – The Rowans & their voyage to the Long Falls; see also 28 March 1885, p.1: Graveyard Hill near Long Falls Creek believed to be the site of old Fort Vienna

“Owensboro Tri-Weekly Messenger”, 26 March 1885, p.1: Tax, agricultural and livestock statistics for McLean County – list of 19 highest taxpayers

“Owensboro Tri-Weekly Messenger”, 28 March 1885, p.4: New telephone lines connecting Owensboro to Glennville, Calhoun & Rockport; see also 2 April 1885, p.4

“Hartford Herald”, 29 April 1885, p.3: Livermore businesses progressing

“Hartford Herald”, 29 April 1885, p.3: Beech Grove a town for about 10 or 12 years

“Owensboro Tri-Weekly Messenger”, 20 October 1885, p.2: McLean County Fair; see also 27 October 1885, p.1

“Owensboro Tri-Weekly Messenger”, 27 February 1886, p.3: New businesses at Rumsey

“Owensboro Tri-Weekly Messenger”, 15 May 1886, p.1: Bank to be established in Calhoun



“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 11 January 1887, p.4: Prohibition in McLean County

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 13 February 1889, p.1: List of citizens of McLean County who pay taxes on over \$3,000 property

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 2 April 1889, p.1: Calhoun Cemetery to be cleaned

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger”, 3 April 1890, pp.1,2&3: Tornadoes hit area, including Daviess, McLean & Ohio Counties and several killed

“Owensboro Weekly Messenger”, 15 May 1890, p.2: Methodist Church to be built at Calhoun

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 18 January 1891, p.1: Old Vienna Notes, recollections of old ferry

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 5 June 1891, p.1: New Calhoun Presbyterian Church dedicated

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 2 October 1891, p.1: New Calhoun Methodist Church nearing completion; see also 4 December 1891, p.1

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 4 October 1891, p.1: New Baptist Church in Livermore to be dedicated; see also 23 October 1891, p.1

“Hartford Herald”, 18 May 1892, p.2: George Swint to publish “McLean County Star” at Calhoun; see also 6 October 1909, p.4; “Hartford Republican”, 8 October 1909, p.1

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 13 June 1894, p.1: Primitive Baptist Church at New Salem, McLean County, dedicated

“Hartford Herald”, 19 September 1894, p.2: Old Buck Creek Baptist Church reorganized; new church to be erected; see also 31 October 1894, p.3; 14 November 1894, p.3, on November 29 new church at Buck Creek to be dedicated

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 15 November 1894, p.1: New Church building at Buck Creek Baptist dedicated; see also 30 November 1894, p.1

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 9 November 1895, p.1: New lock at Rumsey completed; see also 3 December 1895, p.1

“Owensboro Daily Tribune”, 6 December 1895, p.1: Rumsey Lock completed; see also 10 December 1895, p.1

“Owensboro Daily Tribune”, 1 May 1896, p.4: Post office at Wrightsburg in McLean County to be discontinued

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 7 May 1896, p.4: Miners in Muhlenberg and McLean Counties go on strike

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 16 May 1896, .p: Calhoun ferry first on the Green River

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 17 May 1896, p.1: Litigation over Calhoun-Rumsey ferry; see also 23 May 1896 p.1

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 31 July 1896, p.1: Calhoun Christian Church to be dedicated

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 10 September 1896, p.1: Letter to editor from Col. A. R. Shacklett, of Island, KY

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 20 October 1897, p.2: Rumsey Dam near completion

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 25 January 1898, p.3: Mt. Liberty Church in McLean County destroyed by recent cyclone

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 12 March 1898, p.8: Town of Rumsey incorporated

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 3 April 1898, p.9: School building in Calhoun condemned

“Hartford Republican”, 21 August 1908, p.3: New train bridge being erected at Livermore

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 7 Sep 1898, p.7: Some history of Island in McLean County

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 28 October 1898, p.1: New railroad bridge at Livermore completed

“Hartford Herald”, 16 November 1898, p.2: widow’s claim involves ownership of the village of Sacramento and many acres outside

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 13 December 1898, p.7: Nuckols, McLean County, is prospering (info on store there)

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 11 April 1899, p.2: Island church burns down

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 24 June 1899, p.2: Montague Post Office established in McLean County

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 11 August 1899, p.5: New Methodist Church at Rumsey to be dedicated; see also 19 August 1899, p.7, 26 August 1899, p.5

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 22 August 1899, p.2: Methodist Church at Rumsey dedicated

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 24 August 1899, p.1: Owensboro & Calhoun Interurban Railway Company incorporated

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 24 August 1899, p.3: Owensboro & Calhoun Interurban Railway Company incorporated

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 21 September 1899, p.4: Bank of Livermore incorporated

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 16 February 1900, p.5: Clint F. Rose formerly of McLean County and Eugene A. Ely formerly of Daviess County now prominent in Indiana politics

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 12 March 1900, p.2: McLean County census enumeration districts

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 27 March 1900, p.8: T. W. Whitmer of McLean County has written several books of prose and poetry

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 15 April 1900, p.12: Col. A. R. Shacklett meets with old Confederates in Owensboro; see also 31 May 1900, p.6

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 24 July 1900, p.6: Baptist church at Island to be dedicated; see also 1 August 1900, p.2

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 1 August 1900, p.4: Island Baptist Church dedication

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 6 October 1900, p.2: New bank to be established at Beech Grove

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 31 October 1900, p.5: 80th birthday celebration for John G. Atherton at Nuckols

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 27 February 1901, p.5: Destructive fire in Calhoun

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 17 April 1901, p.3: Livermore ghost story

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 28 May 1901, p.6: 76th birthday dinner for Henry Brashear at Nuckols

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 8 June 1901, p.4: Noted case in McLean County, Mrs. Wall versus T. W. Muster estate

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 13 July 1901, p.7: Beech Grove said to be on the eve an oil boom; see also 26 July 1901, p.1, 15 October 1901, p.1, 30 October 1901, p.1; 7 January 1902, p.2, 29 April 1902, p.5

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 27 November 1901, p.3: Construction in Livermore noted

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 28 December 1901, p.7: New hotel to be built by Jake Shutt at Calhoun

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 10 May 1902, p.4: Two women admitted to McLean County bar

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 22 June 1902, p.9: Several new buildings and businesses in Livermore

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 29 June 1902, p.1: George W. Hickman of Calhoun withdraws from congressional race; see also 3 July 1902, p.4

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 27 July 1902, p.1: Christian church at Beech Grove to be rebuilt

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 22 August 1902, p.8: Village of Island seeks to be incorporated

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 23 August 1902, p.2: Island requests to be classified as a 6th class town

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 14 December 1902, p.7 84th birthday dinner for Joseph Bennett of near Livermore

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 12 March 1903, p.5: Corner stone & contents of the Mt. Liberty Church in McLean County stolen

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 10 April 1903, p.1: Beech Grove Methodist Church to be consecrated; see also 22 May 1903, p.5

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 27 September 1903, p.5: Island Deposit Bank incorporated

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 19 November 1904, p.7: R. E. Hackett’s mill burns at Livermore

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 11 December 1904, p.1: Calhoun is dry under the law

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 18 August 1904, p.3: Livermore Mercantile Company incorporated

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 6 April 1905, p.3: Chair factory to be built at Livermore

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 21 May 1905, p.16: Livermore to have a newspaper; see also 25 June 1905, p.4

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 19 June 1905, p.1: L. & N. Railroad depot at Livermore burned

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 3 August 1905, p.1: Fire at Livermore \$15,000 loss

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 4 August 1905, p.3: New Cypress Cumberland Presbyterian Church dedicated in McLean County

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 13 August 1905, p.15: Cypress Cumberland Church in McLean County dedicated

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 15 August 1905, p.1: Racial troubles in Livermore

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 15 September 1905, p.2: Officers for new Beech Grove College elected

“Owensboro Daily Inquirer”, 15 September 1905, p.4: Beech Grove College established

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 24 February 1906, p.1: Electric railway line to Calhoun discussed; see also 25 February 1906, p.5

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 21 March 1906, p.1: Ellsworth McEuen unseated as McLean County clerk

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 7 September 1906, p.3: Beech Grove College completed

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 13 October 1906, p.2: R. G. Cary declared county clerk of McLean County

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 2 March 1907, p.2: “McLean County News” suspends publication

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 13 July 1907, p.3: Richland Baptist Church near Livermore to be dedicated

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 7 August 1907, p.1: Daviess County Baptist Association met at Buck Creek Baptist Church

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 7 August 1907, p.3: Plans for electric railway between Owensboro and Calhoun

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 4 October 1907, p.1: All of McLean County is voted dry

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 9 January 1908, p.1: McLean County courthouse burns; see also 10 January 1908, p.2; 12 January 1908, p.9

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 21 January 1908, p.8: Effort to have new McLean County courthouse at Livermore; see also 26 January 1908, p.9; 29 January 1908, p.3; 3 March 1908, p.5; 12 March 1908, p.5; 5 April 1908, p.4; 11 April 1908, p.; 28 April 1908, p.1

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 13 March 1908, p.2: Efforts to drive blacks out of McLean County

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 18 March 1908, p.5: Owensboro and Calhoun electric railroad to be built

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 26 June 1908, p.1: Road from Livermore Road to Hickman Park opened; see also 11 July 1908, p.7; 12 July 1908, p.9

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 21 March 1909, p.3B: Work begins on new electric light plant at Calhoun

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 9 May 1909, p.9: New McLean County courthouse to be completed by September 1; see also 12 May 1909, p.11; 13 August 1909, p.7

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 8 August 1909, p.1B: Map of Calhoun being made

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 10 October 1909, p.5: Calhoun - Rumsey ferry case heard

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 2 December 1909, p.3: Glover Cary resigns as cashier at Livermore Bank

“Hartford Herald”, 17 August 1910, p.8: No Negroes tolerated at Island

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 21 April 1911, p.1: W. M. Potter, black, killed by mob at Livermore, KY; see also 22 April 1911, p.2; 23 April 1911, p.1A; 25 April 1911, p.1; 13 May 1911, p.1; 14 June 1911, p.6; 23 August 1911, p.1; “Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 5 October 2003, p.3E, "Livermore Lynching: Is the infamous tale of the killing of William Potter fact or fiction?"

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 29 October 1911, p.1A: Sacramento almost wiped out by fire

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 7 December 1911, p.5: Island, McLean County is only KY town that bars Negro race; see also 15 December 1911, p.4

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 13 June 1912, p.6: 100th anniversary of Buck Creek Baptist Church

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 1 December 1912, p.12B: Livermore is thriving town; see also 15 December 1912, p.12C

“Owensboro Daily Messenger” 3 July 1914, p.1: Destructive fire at Beech Grove

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 4 December 1914, p.1: Sacramento business section almost wiped out by fire

“Hartford Herald”, 9 December 1914, p.1: Disastrous fire at Sacramento

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 22 July 1917, p.4A: McLean County’s draft list

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 20 September 1917, p.4: Lists of drafted men from Daviess, Ohio, Breckinridge, McLean, and Hancock Counties who are being sent to Camp Taylor

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 26 September 1918, p.2: Martin Luther Lindsey, 22, of McLean County, died September 20th at Great Lakes Army Camp from Spanish Influenza – first local death from Spanish Influenza; reported in “Owensboro Messenger”

“Owensboro Daily Messenger”, 11 October 1918, p.3: Spanish Flu epidemic at town of Island

“Owensboro Messenger”, 10 January 1919, p.4: McLean County to honor her sons with Courthouse monument

“Owensboro Messenger”, 3 June 1919, p.3: List of soldiers from Breckinridge, Hancock, Henderson, McLean, and Muhlenberg Counties who died in World War I

“Owensboro Messenger”, 3 June 1919, p.5: Changes are made in Bank of Calhoun

“Owensboro Messenger”, 22 June 1919, p.2B: Account of oil discovery at Beech Grove, McLean County

“Owensboro Inquirer”, 10 August 1924, p.1B: Article on Owensboro, Daviess, and Rumsey namesakes

“Owensboro Messenger”, 27 December 1924, p.4: Grave of James Bethel Gresham receives a government monument

“Owensboro Messenger”, 24 November 1925, p.9: Livermore loses Arckenberg home built in 1880

“Owensboro Messenger”, 27 December 1925, p.1: Livermore Theatre burns

“Owensboro Messenger”, 26 August 1928, p.1B: Historian tells of Fort Vienna in Indian days

“Owensboro Messenger”, 13 September 1928, p.5: DAR marker at Fort Vienna completed

“Owensboro Messenger”, 14 October 1928, p.1B: Calhoun Bridge James Bethel Gresham to be dedicated

“Owensboro Messenger”, 28 September 1930, p.1A: “Life in ‘Green River Wilderness’ Is Told By Anthony Thompson’s Son”; DAR erects marker for Revolution War soldier, Anthony Thompson, in McLean County: see also “Owensboro Inquirer”, 3 October 1930, p.7

“Owensboro Messenger”, 19 April 1931, p.2: McLean County’s Court history recalled by veteran attorney

“Owensboro Messenger”, 14 April 1935, p.8B: “Several McLean Graveyards Are More Than One Hundred Years Old”

“Owensboro Messenger”, 4 July 1937, p.3B: Stone marks first settlement – Fort Vienna

“Owensboro Messenger”, 24 October 1937, p.7A: Livermore celebrates 100th anniversary

“Owensboro Messenger”, 5 June 1938, p.2A: Mastodon prehistoric finds in Mclean County; see also 7 August 1938, p.1A

“Owensboro Messenger”, 4 February 1940, p.1B & 3B: Livermore over 100 years old

“Owensboro Messenger”, 18 February 1940, p.1B: Pictures of Calhoun and Rumsey

“Owensboro Messenger”, 17 November 1940, p.1B: Dedication of Livermore bridge

“Owensboro Messenger”, 27 September 1942, p.1B: Mystery house at Beech Grove

“Owensboro Messenger”, 15 February 1944, p.8: Daviess-Mclean Baptist Association

“Owensboro Messenger”, 25 August 1946, p.1B: Livermore Bridge to be toll free

“Owensboro Messenger”, 23 October 1947, p.5: St. Charles Catholic Church in Livermore

“Owensboro Messenger”, 28 May 1949, p.3: Oak Grove Methodist Church in McLean County to dedicate new building

“Owensboro Messenger” 7 September 1952, p.6A: Calhoun’s centennial brings back memories of nation’s early pioneer days

“Owensboro Messenger”, 18 October 1953, p.2D: Rumsey Dam 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary

“Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 22 June 1958, p.11D: Calhoun Funeral Home history dates back to 1845

“Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 9 August 1959 p.1A: “Hal Riddle of Hollywood, Broadway and TV To Be Guest of Family Reunion Here”, native of Calhoun

“Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 2 March 1977, p.:1C Pioneer preacher, Thomas Downs, planted Baptist churches across the area

“Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 30 November 1987, p.1C: Book “Precious Memories of Buck Creek Baptist Church”, by Pearl Nation, published

“Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 20 April 1992, p.1C: “Confederate general used legendary tactic for 1st time in McLean” and ‘Kentucky belle’ warned rebels of nearing troops”, by Glenn Hodges

“Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 11 May 1992, p.1C: “McLean native first American to die in action in World War I”, by Thomas T. Ross

“Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 30 May 1992, Kentucky Portrait section, p.22: “Calhoun named for ‘wild, rollicking’ lawyer



- “Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 21 December 1992, p.1C: “Kentucky’s bicentennial residents struggled with land, Indians”, by Glenn Hodges
- “Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 30 April 1996, p.1D: “Long Falls of Green River, Fort Vienna, Calhoon, Calhoun: McLean County community has had several names, identities since 1700s”, by Glenn Hodges
- “Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 30 April 1996, p.1D: “McLean County communities have varied economic histories”
- “Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 28 April 1997, p.4S: “County includes four cities”, by Mark Cooper
- “Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 30 June 1997, p.1B: Buck Creek Baptist Church to be torn down to make way for expansion
- “Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 27 July 2000, p.1B: “1839 pamphlet tells about frontier life in area”, by Keith Lawrence
- “Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 5 October 2003, p.3E: “Livermore lynching Is the infamous tale of the killing of William Potter fact or fiction”, by Glenn Hodges
- “Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 21 September 2004, p.77S: “Gresham gained fame in death”
- “Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 20 October 2006, Our Region section, p.34: “McLean County: Looking Back, Green River vital to growth”, by Jonna Spelbring
- “Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 7 January 2007, p.1A: “Solid tribute Baptists erect monument to famous preacher with help of genealogist”, by Karen Owen
- “Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 21 April 2007, p.7B: “Downs marker to be dedicated Sunday”
- “Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 6 April 2017, p.1B: “Knight’s life would make a great movie”, by Keith Lawrence
- “Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 31 July 2016, p.1B: Historic Gatton (Ballentine) House, in Rumsey, is for sale
- “Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 30 September 2021, p.1B: “1784 not a good year to travel here”, by Keith Lawrence
- “Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer”, 6 October 2022, p.1B: “1807 lawsuit raises more questions”, by Keith Lawrence



**Messenger-Inquirer, 20 April 1992, p.1C:**

**Confederate general used legendary  
tactic for 1st time in McLean**

By Glenn Hodges, Messenger-Inquirer

Confederate general Nathan Bedford Forrest, whom William Tecumseh Sherman called the "most remarkable man our Civil War produced on either side," used his most legendary cavalry tactic for the first time in McLean County early in the war.

In late 1861, Forrest, then a lieutenant colonel, was leading Confederate forays into river counties northwest of Hopkinsville, gathering hogs, cattle, horses and other supplies for the rebel army.

On Saturday, Dec. 28, about 300 soldiers under his command were moving from Greenville toward Rumsey. Within a few hours, scouts from Forrest's advance guard rode back to report a body of nearly 500 Union cavalry crossing the road eight miles in front of them, also heading to Rumsey.

Forrest's men moved forward at a gallop. "As the news of the proximity of the enemy ran down the column," Forrest wrote later, "it was impossible to repress jubilant and defiant shouts, which reached the heights as the women from the houses waved us forward."

As the lead Confederates moved to a mile south of Sacramento, they sighted the rear of the Union force and opened up on it with Forrest himself snatching a rifle from one of his men and firing the first shot.

After a chase, the rebels made contact with the main column of the Union force. It had raced up a long slope, formed a battle line across the road along the brow of a low ridge and commenced firing from a range of about 200 yards.

Forrest, calmly waiting for the rest of his force to arrive from the south, then drew back his center and dismounted part of his force to act as skirmishers and keep the attention of the Union front.

Falling for the maneuver, judging it as a retreat, the Union force advanced.

Then as the rest of his men arrived, Forrest sent Major D.C. Kelley and a party of Confederates under cover of the woods to the right of the Union line, and Lt. Col. J.W. Starnes' troops went to the left.

As Starnes' force hit the Union left and Kelley's men struck the right flank, Forrest ordered his main column to charge, executing the tactic which he afterward practiced so frequently and with such success in nearly all of his encounters.

Standing up in his stirrups, his saber in his left hand, Forrest led the rush forward into the middle of the Union line at full speed.

Attacked on both flanks, and from the center, the Union cavalry broke and ran. "Retreat to Sacramento" was their cry. For nearly one mile to and then through the village of Sacramento, the pursuit turned into not much more than a horse race, the two sides trading pistol fire as they rode. But, beyond Sacramento, Union officers rallied part of their men and turned upon the Confederates in a bloody hand-to-hand clash. Forrest and men in the advance force plowed into the Union horsemen. As a bullet whizzed through his coat collar, Forrest killed a federal soldier with a pistol shot and dispatched two officers, sabering one and shooting the other.

Forrest charged a Union captain, and both men were thrown as their horses collided and crashed to the ground. The federal captain's shoulder was broken in the fall and he was forced to surrender.

By that time Major Kelley arrived with his men, and the chase and fight, which had covered nearly three miles, ended.



Confederate general Nathan Bedford Forrest, pictured here, was called the "most remarkable man our Civil War produced on either side" by William Tecumseh Sherman.

"My (men's) horses were almost run down while theirs were fresher," Forrest reported. "I deemed it best to call off the chase because many wounded men were hanging to their saddles to keep from falling. Returning we found their dead and wounded in every direction."

Forrest estimated the Union losses as 65 killed and 35 wounded. Union sources said only nine federal officers and men were killed, but 40 men were either captured or missing. Two Confederates were killed and three wounded in the fight, Forrest reported.

Despite several bruises suffered in the fall, Forrest escaped uninjured.

Forrest's charge at Sacramento was his first and only fight in Kentucky and went down, in the words of his commanding officer, as one of the "most brilliant and successful cavalry engagements that the present war has witnessed."

From that time forth, Forrest, who had no military education, used his ingenious tactics again and again in the war in the West – at Fort Donelson, Shiloh, Murfreesboro, Chickamauga, the Nashville campaign, Brice's Crossroads and Selma. His campaigns would become required study in the military schools of Europe and America.

Forrest was the master of the lightning attack and pursuit; he defeated his opponent by "getting there first with the most men." Always in the thick of every fight, he was involved in 22 principal engagements during the war, killed 30 men in hand-to-hand combat, had 29 horses shot from under him and was wounded or injured six times.

In exasperation, during his march to the sea in 1864, Gen. Sherman told his officers that if they could keep "that devil Forrest" off his heels he would cut the Confederacy in two. Sherman also once promised a brigadier general a promotion to major general if he could kill Forrest. After the war, Sherman showed his respect for the wily Confederate cavalryman. "(Forrest) never read

a military book in his life, knew nothing about tactics, could not drill a company, but he had a genius for strategy that was original. He always seemed to know what I was doing or intended to do."

Forrest, a Tennessee native who grew up in Mississippi, moved to Memphis before the war where he was a real estate broker, slave trader and a member of the city board of aldermen. He also ran a plantation in northern Mississippi. After the war Forrest returned to Memphis where he died Oct. 29, 1877, at the age of 56.

The mourners in the cortege on the way to Elmwood Cemetery included former Confederate president Jefferson Davis, members of the Confederate cabinet and some of Forrest's men among the thousands of civilians paying their final tribute. Forrest always had looked out for his men's comfort and safety in the field, even paid for their weapons and horses, and never made a promise to them he didn't keep. He attended their soldier reunions for 10 years after the war until his bad health prevented it. They never forgot his devotion, and in turn responded with pride that during the war they had "rode with Old Bedford."

### ‘Kentucky belle’ warned rebels of nearing troops

By Glenn Hodges, Messenger-Inquirer

As Nathan Bedford Forrest's Confederate cavalry approached Sacramento on Dec. 28, 1861, a young woman suddenly rode out to tell the rebels the position of Union troops moving toward the McLean County village. As they galloped away to challenge the federal force, the Confederates ordered her to go back before any fighting started.

The sight was so inspiring to Forrest that he made a gallant notation of it in his report after the ensuing engagement: "A beautiful young lady, smiling, with untied tresses floating in the breeze, on horseback, met the column just before our advance guard came up with the rear of the enemy, infusing nerve into my arm and kindling knightly chivalry within my heart."

Forrest could not identify her and John A Wyeth's biography of Forrest later referred to her only as "a Kentucky belle." But the woman was later identified as 18-year-old Mary "Mollie" Susan Morehead, the daughter of Hugh Morehead, who had a farm 1 ½ miles north of Sacramento, and the great-aunt of Allen T. Nall, who now lives in Calhoun.

Nall, 86, said Mollie and her sister had been running an errand beyond Sacramento Hill when they spotted the Union troops. While her sister went to warn their parents and brothers, Mollie rode south to alert Forrest's men who were following the federal force.

"She wanted to go with the troops, but they made her go back," said Nall, who first learned about the story from his aunt, Fannie Martin. "I've known about it many years, since I was about 14 years old."

Mary "Mollie" Morehead was; born in 1843 and married a dentist, ; George E. Stowers, in 1866. She died in childbirth March 29, 1870, and is buried with her infant son in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church cemetery at Sacramento.



**Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 11 May 1992, p.1C:**

McLean native first American to die in action in World War I  
Jim Gresham's name endures as that of a hero

By Thomas T. Ross, Messenger-Inquirer

At an early age, Jim Gresham decided a soldier's life was for him.

The McLean County native was the son of a Civil War veteran who fought for the Southern cause.

The boy admired his daddy and wanted to follow in his footsteps.

While growing up in the Robards area of Henderson County and Evansville, the adventuresome boy likely daydreamed of finding glory on the battlefield.

On the morning of Nov. 3, 1917, the 24-year-old handsome Doughboy found glory the second he was killed.

He was the first American soldier to fall in battle in World War I. He died instantly, never knowing of the glory that would be bestowed upon his name.

"Perhaps it was fitting," his mother said hours after learning of her son's death and the dubious distinction that went with it "He was the first into Mexico, in the first lot of men to be sent to France and now he's the first to die."

Still, the distinction did little to console a grieving mother. "Yes, he's a hero, and for his sake I ought to be brave," she told a reporter from the Owensboro Messenger. "But I'm not a hero. I'm just a mother and my boy is dead."

#### A hero's tale

The name of James Bethel Gresham is sprinkled throughout history books. Other than brief accounts of his death, little has been written about his life in western Kentucky and southern Indiana.

Through the help of the Owensboro-Daviess County Public Library and the Evansville Museum of Arts and Science, a story unfolds by pulling bits and pieces from newspaper clippings.

Green Gresham and Alice Bethel married Dec. 7, 1882, in Henderson County. They would have five children.



Cpl. James Bethel Gresham's name went down in history when he died Nov. 3, 1917.

James Bethel Gresham, eldest of the three boys, was born Aug. 23, 1893, in a log cabin in the Beech Grove area of McLean County.

He was baptized Dec. 13 that year at Beech Grove Chapel Methodist Church, then known as McGhee's Chapel.

He was known as Jim to his friends, but his mother took to calling him by his middle name, "Bethel."

The family had moved to Beech Grove from Henderson County, and soon moved back after James was born.

Sheila Heflin, who works at the library and is a McLean County history buff, said the family might have been tenant farmers, moving from job to job.

Gresham was 7 when his father died, prompting his mother to pack up the family and move to Evansville near the turn of the century. She later remarried. They moved into a home at 10th and Ohio streets, and Gresham, who had a speech impediment, was enrolled at Centennial School.

"He was not a good student at Centennial School," his mother told The Evansville Press.

"He would not study. He quit in the fourth grade to go to work. My hopes were that he would be a minister, but he did not feel the call."

### The call of battle

Gresham grew up in an era when war was considered a splendid and glorious adventure.

There was Teddy Roosevelt's romanticized charge up San Juan Hill, American troops in the Philippines and Gresham's own admiration of his father's service in the Rebel army.

He loved the camaraderie of Army life, a feeling that can be gleaned from the last letter he wrote his mother. He datelined it, "France Somewhere."

"The last time I wrote to you I was trying to cook for 200 men, but I am back in the company now, and glad of it, for when I was away from the company I didn't feel right.

"I wanted to be with the boys."

In a 1974 Memorial Day article, the Sunday Courier and Press said Gresham was so eager to join up that he lied about his age.

He was 20 – four months from the required age of 21 when he joined the Army.

The United States, led by Gen. John "Blackjack" Pershing, had invaded Mexico in pursuit of Pancho Villa. Gresham, who looked dashing in his campaign hat, soon joined the pursuit.

Among the newspaper clippings on Gresham, little is to be found of his adventure in Mexico.

Lt. O.E. Michaelis, Gresham's platoon leader in Mexico, gave a glimpse in a letter he had written to Alice Dodd upon her son's death.

"At one time it appeared he might be discharged from the service, because he was so light the Army feared he could not carry his heavy field pack.

"But he begged me to stay in, and said all he wanted was to be a soldier.

"The Mexican expedition developed him tremendously, and when he sailed for France he had developed into a splendid specimen of physical manhood and his comrades all spoke most highly of him."

### The Glory Road

Within weeks of the U.S. declaring war on Germany in 1917, Gresham re-enlisted.

A private, he was back with his old unit, Company F of the 1st Infantry Division's 16th Regiment.

Gresham soon found himself in France with Pershing and the rest of the American Expeditionary Forces.

According to "The Doughboys" by Laurence Stallings, all elements of the 1st Division, commonly known as the famous Big Red One, were training in France by the end of July.

By Oct. 21, Stallings writes, the Big Red One was ready to defend quiet trenches in the Luneville sector of the Lorraine front.

"It was beautiful country, rolling hills and clumps of larches and poplars screening the small villages with their wisps of smoke from chimney pots quiet, serene, unscarred by heavy warfare," Stallings wrote.

All elements of the Big Red One moved into deep trenches. The 18th Regiment was on the right, then Gresham's 16th, the 26th and the 28th holding the left.

The Germans across the way became curious and moved an assault company forward to study the situation.

On the night of Nov. 2, the assault company was brought to the German front line to make a hit-and-run raid on the Yanks.

At 3 a.m., the Germans let loose an artillery barrage that blanketed the American line.

Then the fire was concentrated, isolating Gresham's company in a box barrage. Then it closed in even more, concentrating on one platoon front.

"There was nothing now, on the face of the earth, which could reach this chosen platoon" to help it, Stallings wrote.

Armed with Luger pistols, grenades and trench knives, the assault company ran across the 200 meters that separated the two forces.

"The platoon first knew of the Germans' presence when grenades burst among them," Stallings said.

Sgt. William Hastings, who was with Gresham when he died, gave an account of the raid to The Evansville Press in 1921.

Gresham was on sentry duty and standing in the door of a dugout when the barrage ceased.

Hastings was sitting on a stool inside the doorway. The officers had passed along word that all was safe.

Through smoke and fog, a pistol was leveled at Gresham. He apparently thought it was another Doughboy or French soldier.

"Don't shoot, I'm an American," Hastings heard Gresham say.

The German who was pointing the Luger at Gresham apparently replied in English. There are two versions, both just as chilling, of what was said.

"It's Americans we're looking for," one account states.

The other: "I'm shooting every damned thing in sight tonight" The pistol blast was practically point-blank, striking Gresham between the eyes. He tumbled across Hastings' legs.

Two other Doughboys were killed in the three-minute raid, Thomas F. Enright of Pittsburgh and Merle D. Hay of Glidden, Iowa. Officers determined, however, that Gresham was the first to fall.

Kaiser Wilhelm II, emperor of Germany, reportedly had offered 300 marks, 30 days' leave in Berlin and an Iron Cross for the first Americans taken dead or alive.

#### Gresham remembered

His comrades praised Gresham, who received a posthumous promotion to corporal, as a fine and worthy soldier.

"There was no better soldier in the company than Gresham," Hastings said. "He would have gone much higher in rank but for the fact he stuttered."

"You cannot praise him too strongly to suit us. He deserves every bit of honor that he will ever get."

Gresham, Enright and Hay were buried near Bathelemont. The French erected a monument to the three, a small replica of which is displayed at the Evansville museum.

In part, the inscription says: "As worthy sons of their great and noble nation, they have fought for justice, liberty, and civilization against the German Imperialism, scourge of mankind. They died on the Field of Honor."

His remains were brought back to Evansville in 1921. Hundreds filed through the Coliseum on that July day that Gresham's body lay in state. The next day he was reinterred in Locust Hill Cemetery.

In 1928, McLean County and Kentucky paid homage to Gresham's memory by naming the new bridge at Calhoun the "James Bethel Gresham Memorial Bridge." Another bridge that crosses the Green River near Beech Grove is named in Gresham's honor.

The old and tired bridge at Calhoun is to be replaced within the next few years. The new bridge, however, likely will be named after Fort Vienna, the first settlement of what is now known as Calhoun.

But Gresham's legacy will not be forgotten. R. Miller Holland's moving address at the dedication of the Gresham bridge was prophetic.

"As we look at this magnificent structure, we are impressed with its strength and its capacity to endure.

"But when its steel shall have rusted and fallen into decay, when its stone shall have crumbled into dust and long after this generation of men who take pride in its usefulness shall have passed away, the name of Corporal James Bethel Gresham shall still endure in history as the initial offering made in the greatest military struggle that the world had then seen."



**Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 21 December 1992, p.1C:**

**Kentucky's bicentennial residents struggled with land, Indians**

By Glenn Hodges, Messenger-Inquirer

The origin of what is now McLean County dates back to the middle 1780s when white settlers from the East began to inhabit land at the "Long Falls of Green River," the future site of Calhoun.

William Rowan of Pennsylvania and five families arrived there on May 11, 1784, and others are known to have settled at that location at about the same time. Henry Rhoads, a native of Germany and veteran of the Revolutionary War, laid out a town on a 2,000-acre site there in 1785 and called it Rhoadsville.

During the same period, John Hanley came to Long Falls as an agent for the Dorsey family of Maryland, which had partial claim to the settled land. To resolve uncertainty over the land titles, Hanley filed a lawsuit against Rhoads and won the court case.



Afterward, Rhoads moved southeast to what is now Browder and became the founder of Muhlenberg County. Hanley assumed leadership of the town, and by March 1786, its name was changed to Vienna.

From the beginning of the settlement there, residents were subjected to sporadic raids by Indians. The Rowan family's horses were stolen the second night after their arrival. So a fortification was needed for protection. The fort built by Henry Rhoads' brother Solomon in 1785 was not the usual wooden stockade constructed on the frontier, but actually a series of tunnels dug back into the ground from the north bank of Green River and running 10 to 20 feet into a rocky hill in what is now Calhoun.

The top of the ridge was solid rock and offered natural protection on three sides, while the river provided security on the fourth side.

The rock formation itself was a formidable citadel against attack and the settlement took on the name Fort Vienna.

In a deposition given in 1924, Ben Landrum, a longtime resident of Calhoun, said he could remember old Fort Vienna as far back as 1857. "The first settlers of Calhoun lived just about where the town of Calhoun now is and they had easy access to the fort when necessity forced them to take refuge there. The fort was well stocked, I was told, with necessities whereby the settlers could remain several days at a time without suffering any great discomfort."

One recorded raid by Shawnees provided proof of the fort's unique defensive capability. According to a story told by Stephen Rowan, a son of William Rowan, Vienna was besieged for many days by a large war party. The situation became so serious that two men volunteered to go for help. They managed to slip past the Indian lines and reached Fort Hartford in Ohio County safely. Soon all the Hartford men who could be spared arrived in Vienna to help the settlers. Before they got there, however, the Shawnees had given up, lifted their siege and left.

By 1800 the Indian threat had ended along Green River and the fort was no longer needed for defense. The site of the old fort is about 200 yards from the Calhoun-Rumsey bridge and was designated with a Daughters of the American Revolution historic site marker in 1928.

McLean County's second settlement was Pond Station, built in 1790 by James Inman, five miles south of Vienna. The portion of McLean County south of Green River was in Logan County in 1792 and included in Muhlenberg County, formed in 1798.

But Pond Station faded away, and Rumsey - situated on the south bank of the Green opposite Vienna - became the next leading settlement in the Muhlenberg County portion of what would become McLean County. The new town was founded in 1834 and named for James Rumsey, a pioneer in steamboat navigation.

Construction on a lock and dam at Rumsey began in 1835, causing an economic boom, and the town was incorporated by 1839. Rumsey, for a time, was the largest town in the area with groceries, taverns, shipyards, woolen mills and carriage and wagon factories.

In 1837, William Brown founded a new town at the confluence of Green and Rough rivers, and donated land for its streets and public square. County historians believe the town was named for Alonzo Livermore, the engineer who built the dam at Rumsey. Livermore turned into a thriving community with the advent of furniture factories and the coming of the Owensboro-Russellville railroad line in 1872.

At the same time Livermore and Rumsey were growing, Vienna, despite its promising beginning, declined in importance. As late as 1850, there were only a few houses there. In 1852, former circuit judge John Calhoun was given a charter for a new town, the site of which encompassed all of old Vienna.

An act was passed by the state legislature Jan. 28, 1854, forming the county of McLean out of Muhlenberg, Ohio and Daviess. It was named for judge and former Congressman Alney McLean, a distinguished Muhlenberg County resident who had died in 1841. What had been old Vienna was renamed Calhoon in honor of Judge Calhoon. The spelling of the town's name was changed to Calhoun over the years.

A spirited fight soon took place between Calhoon and Rumsey over which town would be the county seat. Charles Hambleton of Breckinridge County and F.M. Bristow of Logan County were brought together to decide the matter at James Landrum's tavern in Calhoon. Concurrently, the Green River flooded and the water covered most of Rumsey. So the decision was made to put the county seat on the highest ground, which was in Calhoon.

The other McLean County communities of size which were established by the mid-1850s were Island and Sacramento.

Island was a coal mining settlement founded in about 1829 by William Worthington and first called Worthington Station. It was renamed Island in 1882 because, according to county historians, it was always surrounded by water when the Green River flooded. By 1912 when large underground mines were in operation there, the community had a population of 1,100.

The community of Cross Roads was laid out by George Helm nine miles south of Calhoon in 1854. By 1860 the name was changed to Sacramento by Kentucky miners who had been to the California town of that name during the 1849 Gold Rush.

McLean County experienced a great era of development after the Civil War. Railroads were being built across the United States and millions of McLean County trees were used to make the crossties on which they were laid.

Green River offered easy delivery by barge as the timber went to Evansville to be converted into lumber and to manufacture furniture.

As the timber was cut the land was cleared for farming. The rich bottomland along the Green was transformed into fields of corn, wheat and tobacco. Factories in the county shipped the tobacco down the river, which became the chief means of communication and transportation until the building of the county's road system in 1923.



**Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 30 April 1996, p.1D:**

**Long Falls of Green River, Fort Vienna, Calhoon, Calhoun:  
McLean County community has had several names, identities since 1700s**

**By Glenn Hodges, Messenger-Inquirer**

In the middle 1780s, white settlers from the East began inhabiting land at what was called the "Long Falls of Green River" – the future site of Calhoun in McLean County.

Five families led by William Rowan of Pennsylvania arrived there on May 11, 1784, and another group of pioneers settled at that location at about the same time.

Henry Rhoads, a native of Germany and veteran of the Revolutionary War, laid out a town on the 2,000-acre site in 1785 and called it Rhoadsville.

During the same period, John Hanley came to Long Falls as an agent for the Dorsey family of Maryland, which had partial claim to the settled land.

To resolve uncertainty over the land titles, Hanley sued Rhoads and won the court case. Afterward, Rhoads moved southeast to what is now Browder and became the founder of Muhlenberg County. Hanley assumed leadership of Rhoadsville, and by March 1786, its name was changed to Vienna.

From the beginning of the settlement there, residents were under the threat of Indian raids. The Rowan family's horses were stolen the second night after they arrived, so a fortification was needed for protection.

The fort built by Henry Rhoads' brother Solomon in 1785 was not the usual wooden stockade constructed on the frontier, but actually a series of tunnels dug back into the ground from the north bank of Green River and running 10 to 20 feet into a rocky hill.

The top of the ridge was solid rock and offered natural protection on three sides, while the river provided security on the fourth side. The rock formation itself was a formidable citadel against attack and the settlement took on the name Fort Vienna.



Left: Judge John Calhoun. Right: The site of old Fort Vienna on the north bank of Green River at Calhoun is about 200 yards west of the Calhoun-Rumsey bridge and is designated with this historic site marker placed there in 1928 by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

In 1924, Ben Landrum, a longtime resident of Calhoun, said he could remember old Fort Vienna as far back as 1857.

"The first settlers of Calhoun lived just about where the town of Calhoun now is and they had easy access to the fort when necessity forced them to take refuge there. The fort was well stocked, I was told, with necessities whereby the settlers could remain several days at a time without suffering any great discomfort."

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for many days by a large war party. The situation became so serious that two men volunteered to go and seek help from Fort Hartford.

But before a team of fighting men from Hartford arrived to help the Vienna settlers, the Shawnees had given up and lifted their siege. The impregnable earthworks along Green River had forced them to withdraw.

After the Indian threat ended along Green River around 1800, the fort was no longer needed for defense.

The site of the old fortification is about 200 yards west of the present Calhoun-Rumsey bridge and was designated with a Daughters of the American Revolution historic site marker in 1928.

Despite its promising beginning, Vienna declined in importance in years to come, and was overshadowed by the community of Rumsey across the river. As late as 1850, there were only a few houses at Vienna.

In 1852, former Circuit Judge John Calhoun was given a charter for a new town, the site of which encompassed all of old Vienna.

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**Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 30 April 1996, p.1D:**

**McLean County communities have varied economic histories**

The second community established in what is now McLean County was called Pond Station and was formed in 1790 by James Inman, 5 miles south of Vienna.

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## McLean County Historical Markers

- “County Named” (marker number 1123). Marker is in Calhoun on the McLean County Courthouse lawn at the intersection of Main Street (Kentucky Route 81) and 2nd Street, on the right when traveling north on Main Street. Erected in 1968 by the Kentucky Historical Society & Kentucky Department of Highways. Side one inscription – County Named: For Judge Alney McLean, lawyer and politician. Established in 1854, from parts of Daviess, Ohio, and Muhlenberg Counties. Solomon Rhoads and James Inman settled in 1788. First county officers were: Sanders Eaves, judge; Alfred Tanner, clerk; Henry Griffith, sheriff; Frank McLean, county attorney; Jacob Davis, surveyor; James Hinton, jailer. See over. Side two inscription – Calhoun: Named for John Calhoun, circuit judge, Congressman, 1835 to 1839. Formed in 1784 as Rhoadsville, it became known as Fort Vienna, 1785, when Solomon Rhoads built a fort here. Boyhood home of the builder and master of "My Old Kentucky Home," Senator John Rowan, Esq. Calhoun incorporated, 1852. Made county seat, 1854. Called "Capital of Green River Country." See over.
- “Camp Calhoun”. Marker is in Calhoun on West 3rd Street west of Poplar Street, on the right when traveling west. Located at Camp Calhoun Cemetery. Erected in 2008 by Commonwealth of Kentucky, City of Calhoun, McLean County Cemetery Board & Fiscal Court, Forrest's Orphans Camp 1744 SCV. Inscription – Camp Calhoun: Defending Lock No. 2, Confederate forces occupied Bowling Green on September 18, 1861. Young men, eager to support the Union cause and filled with thoughts of adventure, joined Home Guard

units across Kentucky. Before the end of the month 2,000 men recruited in McLean and neighboring counties arrived in Calhoun to defend Green River Lock No. 2. They established a camp on a hill overlooking the Green River about ¼ mile west of where you now stand. Controlling access to the Green River and its major tributary, the Big Barren, was vital. Navigable from Bowling Green to the Ohio River, the rivers formed an important trade route. When the Confederates seized Lock No. 3 at Rochester soon after occupying Bowling Green, Union forces rushed to secure the remaining locks. The Green River became the dividing line between Union and Confederate forces in Kentucky. Camp Calhoun: Near the end of September several Indiana infantry regiments arrived at the "camp at Calhoun" bringing the total number of men to more than 5,000. In November, General Thomas L. Crittenden, appointed commander of Camp Calhoun, arrived with his command. In late January more troops arrived in readiness for the Union advance to be spearheaded by General Ulysses S. Grant's assaults on Forts Henry and Donelson. Camp Calhoun now housed between 10,000 and 15,000 men. In contrast, the civilian population of Calhoun was little more than 500. In early February 1862, most of the troops at Camp Calhoun left to take part in Grant's invasion of Tennessee and the battles at Fort Henry and Fort Donelson. Other regiments soon left to advance on Mill Springs, Bowling Green and Nashville. The Confederates abandoned Kentucky and the focus of the war shifted south. The Green River region was far from safe, however. Rebel raiders and guerilla forces including "Sue Mundy" continued to operate. A small force remained at Camp Calhoun to counter this constant threat. The last state Guard unit left Camp Calhoun in late February 1865, which corresponds to the last known burial at Camp Calhoun Cemetery. Photo of Gen. Thomas Leonidas Crittenden, commander of Camp Calhoun. Thomas Crittenden was the son of Kentucky statesman John Crittenden, author of the Crittenden Compromise, an attempt to find a peaceful solution to the differences that even then seemed destined to end in civil war. The Crittenden family exemplified the divisiveness of the War. Thomas' brother George joined the Confederate army, in which he also became a general.

- “Camp Calhoun Cemetery”. Marker is in Calhoun on West 3rd Street west of Poplar Street, on the right when traveling west. Erected in 2008 by Commonwealth of Kentucky, City of Calhoun, McLean County Cemetery Board & Fiscal Court, Forrest's Orphans Camp 1744 SCV. Inscription – Camp Calhoun Cemetery: Well over 200 soldiers are known to have died of disease during Camp Calhoun's short existence. The number is probably higher but many records are missing or incomplete. "there health is so very bad": It was not long before illness and disease were rampant at Camp Calhoun, a situation that was, unfortunately, common in many garrisons and recruiting camps. Once measles, mumps, typhoid, pneumonia and influenza entered camp they spread rapidly, with deadly results. Calhoun became a city of makeshift hospitals. The Courthouse, Methodist Church and a number of private homes were filled with ailing soldiers. Crowded Conditions, Poor Hygiene and Rats: Why did so many men die of disease while at Camp Calhoun? Many of the young men who came to Calhoun had never traveled far from home and they had never been exposed to common diseases. These men were thrown together in cramped and often unsanitary conditions. There was little understanding of how diseases were contracted or transmitted in the 1860s. The causes of infection were unknown. A large infestation of rats made matters even worse. Camp Calhoun's dead were buried here, in two lots set aside for a community cemetery in the original 1852 plat of Calhoun. Those who died in camp are

not the only soldiers buried here. The eight men killed during the Battle of Sacramento on December 28, 1861 and the two who later died of wounds sustained in that battle were also buried here. Several soldiers died in accidents. They too were interred here. Restoring Camp Calhoun Cemetery: Efforts to identify those interred in the Camp Calhoun Cemetery and to erect suitable memorials began in 1997. The restored Camp Calhoun Cemetery was dedicated in May 2008. . . . i have been visiting my friends in the 31st reg, at calhoun kentky to my sorrow they are in bad condition of health caused by imprudence incompatancy or neglect of the officers there health is so very bad only near half of the reg is able to turnout to service . . . many of the sick and feeble have spent there last money and there friends money to procure some little nourshing food . . . from a letter to Indiana Governor O. P. Morton dated January 10, 1862 from a visitor to Camp Calhoun (Spelling original). Photo captions: Top right: Dr. James M. Baily was a surgeon in the 26th Kentucky Infantry, organized at Camp Calhoun in December 1861. Bottom left: Thousands of patriotic young men enlisted in the Union army. Many did not survive their short tenure in recruiting and training camps.

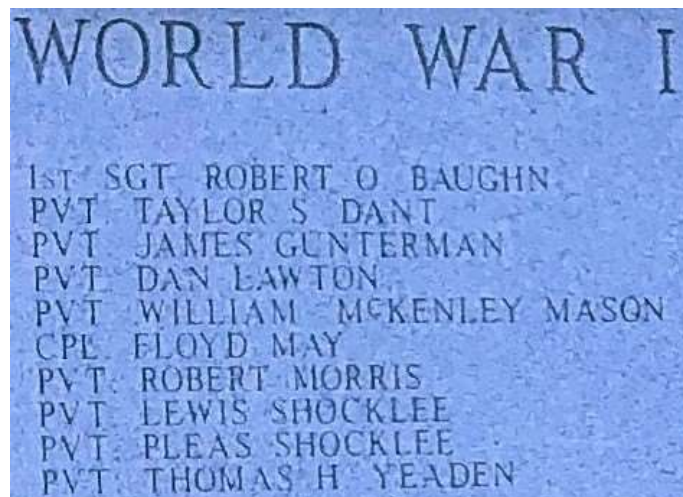
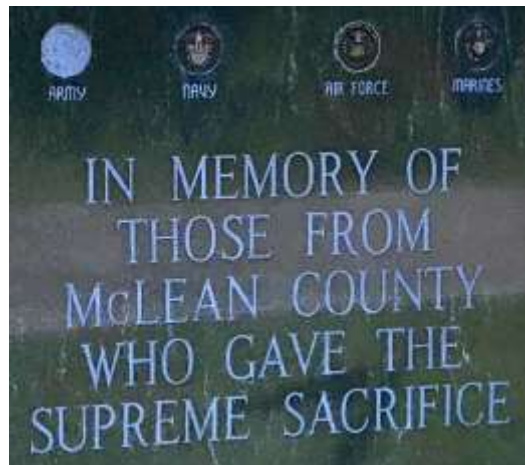
- “Forrest Reconnoitered” (marker number: 665). Marker is in Calhoun at the intersection of Poplar Street and West 2nd Street, on the right when traveling south on Poplar Street. Erected 24 June 1964 by the Kentucky Historical Society & Kentucky Department of Highways. Side one inscription – On reconnaissance and search for supplies, late Nov. 1861, CSA Gen. Nathan B. Forrest's cavalry scouted area. Reported USA forces of Gen. T. C. Crittenden gathered here. Forrest moved on to west. Again in area, Dec. 28, 1861, Forrest met and defeated Union scouting force in battle at Sacramento. CSA escaped capture by USA troops sent from Calhoun. See map over. Side two – Kentucky map of: Confederate Raids and Invasions and a Federal Retreat, in Kentucky.
- “Union Camp Site” (marker number 830). Marker is near Calhoun on Kentucky Route 250, 0.4 miles west of Reeves School Road, on the right when traveling west. Marker was erected in 1965 by the Kentucky Historical Society & Kentucky Department of Highways. Side one inscription – Union Camp Site: In July 1864 Co. D, 35th Regt. Ky. Vol. Mtd. Inf. camped, north on Houston land. Muster, Owensboro Oct. 2, 1863. Guarded area between Cumberland and Green Rivers. Part of Union force that defeated CSA Gen. Adam R. Johnson's Partisan Rangers at Grubb's Cross Roads in Aug. 1864. Fought at Saltville, Va. Mustered out at Louisville, Dec. 29, 1864. Roster other side. Side two inscription – McLean County Recruits, Co. D 35 Regt. KY. Vol. Mounted Inf.: Chas. W. D. (Frank) Prange, Capt.; Geo. W. Mosley, Jas. T. Goode, Lieuts.; Wm. A. Short, John H. Taylor, Sgts.; James R. Baughn, Western Mitchell, Joseph F. Baughn, Thomas A. Nally, Allen H. Benton, James D. Nally, Granville Brown, Charles F. Prange, Michael Conley, Malvin Presley, Cpl., Remos G. Cary, William L. Roads, Samuel A. Hudson, Mark L. T. Robertson, Hubbard V. Hicks, Lafayette Riley, George L. Jones, Alexander Stogner, John W. Little, James A. Taylor, Lucius L. Mitchell, William B. Taylor
- Surprise Attack Here (marker number 523). Marker is located just south of Sacramento at junction of KY 81 & KY 85. Marker commemorating the Battle of Sacramento was erected on 4 November 1962 by the Kentucky Historical Society & Kentucky Department of Highways. Inscription – CSA cavalry from Hopkinsville under Colonel Nathan Bedford

Forrest surprised Union forces under Major Eli H. Murray December 28, 1861. Forrest sent dismounted men to attack both enemy flanks, and, with the remainder mounted, he bore down road upon Union center, which broke and fled. Forrest pursued 4 miles, dispersed USA troops, returned to Hopkinsville.

- “William Worthington (1761-1848)” (marker number 1812). Marker is in Island at the Island Baptist Church at the intersection of Adams Avenue (U.S. 431) and East Main Street, on the right when traveling north on Adams Avenue. Marker was erected on 14 November 1987 by the Kentucky Historical Society & Kentucky Department of Highways. Inscription – This early settler owned large tract of "Island" territory, cut off during times of high water. He served in Revolutionary War under George Rogers Clark, 1781. Became circuit court judge, 1803, then postmaster of Worthington (now Island) in 1829. Judge Worthington was a member of Ky. Senate, 1812-25. Buried north of town. Chapel bears family name.
- “Hansford” (marker number 1950). Location: Calhoun Cemetery, Old Calhoun-Owensboro Rd., KY 81. Erected on 15 June 1996 by the Kentucky Historical Society & Kentucky Department of Highways. Side one inscription – A privateer in Virginia's Navy during the American Revolution, Hansford sailed off eastern coast of U.S., West Indies, and Spain. He was captured three times by the British. Only he and one other of 36 prisoners survived a three-month confinement on the prison ship Jersey, nicknamed "Hell Afloat." Presented by Descendants of Charles Hansford. Side two inscription – Charles Hansford (1759-1850) - This Revolutionary War soldier enlisted in Virginia in 1775 and served six months; enlisted in 1777 and discharged in nine months. Charles Hansford then ran away and went to sea as a privateer. Buried NW of here on Mayo Hill, Scotts Bridge Road. Presented by Descendants of Charles Hansford.
- “Livermore Bridge” (marker number 892). Marker is in Livermore at the intersection of Highway 431 and Old Island-Livermore Road (State Route 138), on the right when traveling south on Highway 431. Marker was erected in 1965 by the Kentucky Historical Society & Kentucky Department of Highways. Inscription: When this structure was built, a unique contribution to history was made. It is claimed to be only river bridge in the world which begins and ends in the same county (McLean), spans two rivers (Green and Rough), and crosses another county (Ohio), a small point of which lies between the rivers. It is 1,350 feet long. Dedication of the bridge held Nov. 13, 1940.
- “James Bethel Gresham” (marker number 664). Marker is in Beech Grove at the junction of KY 56 & 136. Marker was erected on 24 June 1964 by the Kentucky Historical Society & Kentucky Department of Highways. Inscription – James Bethel Gresham: First American killed in action, World War I. Born Beech Grove, 1893, moved to Indiana, 1901, and enlisted there, 1914. Served under Gen. Pershing on Mexican border, 1916. Sent overseas June 14, 1917. Pfc. Gresham killed, Nov. 3, 1917, in the battle of Sommerviller, Lorraine. French honored him with monument there. Buried in Indiana. Silver Star citation, Jan. 1920.



- “Corp. James Bethel Gresham Memorial Bridge” (marker number 1199). Marker is in Rumsey, at south end of bridge on KY 81. Marker was erected on 12 December 1968 by the Kentucky Historical Society & Kentucky Department of Highways. Inscription – Erected 1928, honoring the first American killed in action in World War I on Nov. 3, 1917, at Battle of Sommerviller. Enlisted in 1914 in Indiana. With Pershing in Mexico, 1916. Sent overseas, June 14, 1917, with first American soldiers of AEF. Born McLean Co., Aug. 23, 1893. Buried in France; reinterred, Evansville, Ind., 1921.
- Rumsey (marker number 1264). Marker is located at the junction KY 81 & KY 138. Marker was erected in 1969 by the Kentucky Historical Society & Kentucky Department of Highways. Inscription – Founded in 1834. Named for James Rumsey, steam navigation pioneer, at request of his nephew Edward Rumsey, US Congressman from this area, 1837-39. James Rumsey had first boat successfully operated by steam to carry both freight and passengers, Potomac River, 1786. The first steamboat on Green River, LUCY WING, was built here in 1846 by the Jones Brothers.
- McLean County War Memorial”. Marker is in Calhoun on Main Street (Kentucky Route 81) 0.1 miles south of Kentucky Route 815, on the right when traveling south. Located at the Calhoun Cemetery. Erected in 1989 by V.F.W Post Number 5415. Inscription:



# WORLD WAR II

PFC ALVEY ABNEY  
PH. MT. F. C. RICHARD ALEXANDER, JR.  
PVT. MARVIN T. AUSTIN  
PVT. ROBERT M. BARNETT  
PVT. T. A. BLACKWELL, JR.  
PFC. THOMAS E. BLADES  
S/SGT. HAROLD T. BOWMAN  
PVT. ELVIS E. CHERRY  
S/SGT. HUGH C. CLARK  
T/SGT. HERMAN B. DONAHOO  
PVT. HUGH R. DURBIN  
S/SGT. LAYTON DUDLEY ERWIN  
PFC. CHARLIE FARRIS  
1ST. LT. WILLIAM D. GOODLOE, JR.  
SGT. FRED N. GOODWIN  
PFC. DEWEY D. HOWARD  
CPL. JAMES D. JONES  
S/SGT. WALTER R. KIRKLAND  
2ND. LT. HARVE M. LACEFIELD  
SGT. LAWRENCE E. LEE  
PVT. WILLIAM M. MORRIS  
FLT. OFFICER J. STILES OWENS, JR.  
CPT. PRESTON T. PAYNE  
PFC. JAKE T. QUISENBERRY  
1ST. CLASS P. O. GLOVER REDFERN  
F. I. C. L. GRUNDY RICKARD  
SGT. OLIVER ROBERTSON  
PFC. WILLIAM J. ROBERTSON  
S/SGT. VEACHEL F. STRANEY  
CPL. SHERELL TANNER  
T. SGT. WILLARD W. TAPP  
PVT. CHARLES F. THOMASSON  
T/5. RETHEL M. THOMASSON  
1ST. LT. E. E. WHEELER  
S/SGT. HERMAN H. WILSON  
S/SGT. JAMES F. WRIGHT

# KOREAN WAR

CPL LESLIE J. FITTS  
PVT WILLIAM J. KING  
PVT ELLISE E. TOWERY

# WAR ON TERRORISM

## IRAQ

SPC ROBERT JASON SETTLE

# VIETNAM WAR

MAJ DAVID R. MACKAY  
SGT DAVID H. MAGRUDER

# FORMER MCLEAN COUNTIANS WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN WAR ZONES

PVT WOODROW W. COGHILL  
PVT C. ALTON DAVIS  
CPL JAMES BETHEL GRESHAM  
SGT JOHN R. MAUZY  
CPT DAVID L. WILHITE